

City of Lynnwood
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
July 28, 2005

Commissioners present:

Patrick Decker, Chair
Brian Bigler
Elisa Elliott
Marina Georgiev
Dave Johnson
Donna Walther

Staff present:

James Cutts, Director of Community Dev.
Ron Hough, Planning Manager
Dennis Lewis, Senior Planner

Commissioners absent:

Tia Peycheff

Others Present:

Ted Hikel, City Council Liaison

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Decker called this meeting to order at 7:00 pm. A quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Johnson moved to approve the July 14, 2005 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bigler and passed unanimously.

COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT

City Council member Ted Hikel was unable to attend the first part of this meeting but sent his written report in advance. The report was accepted and acknowledged by the Chair.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

None

COMMISSION MEMBER DISCLOSURES

Commissioner Walther disclosed her personal interests in the Good Shepherd Baptist Church proposal as the owner/resident of an adjacent condominium. She stated that she will not participate in that portion of the public hearing or discussion.

Commissioner Johnson disclosed that he is employed by Edmonds Community College but his employment will not affect his participation in this meeting.

PUBLIC HEARING

F-1: Comprehensive Plan Amendments

Chair Decker announced this agenda item and informed the audience of the order of presentation and procedures for public testimony. Since nearly everyone in the audience was interested primarily in the Good Shepherd proposal, Planning Manager Ron Hough gave a brief PowerPoint presentation on that proposal only, to be followed by testimony. Other proposals would be discussed later in the meeting.

Following the staff presentation, Chair Decker submitted three items of correspondence that were sent to him personally. A letter from Amos & Margaret Chapman was new and entered into the record as Attachment #11. A letter from Jack and Mary Hisayasu was submitted earlier and is Attachment #7 to the staff report. A letter/petition from Copper Ridge Condominiums was submitted earlier and is Attachment #6.

Chair Decker opened the public hearing for testimony from the audience, beginning with comments from the applicant.

Lynn Melby (representing the Good Shepherd Baptist Church) described his 35 year long association with the church and his role in the visioning process. He explained that the church is committed to providing dignified affordable housing for senior citizens. He noted that the church property is the only remaining property along the full length of 196th Street that is still zoned for single-family development. All other properties have received rezones at various points in time, including the Copper Ridge Condos next door. The church didn't object to the church's rezoning. The church feels this is a good location for a senior housing project. It is close to most of the services that are important to seniors. In developing their plan, they became aware of the City's housing policies and want to place their housing facility near 196th Street so it will be near other multi-family housing and away from the single-family neighborhood to the north. Most of the rear portion of the lot would remain undeveloped. They are partnering with experts in the field of senior housing and with good architects to ensure a quality project.

Commissioner Bigler asked Mr. Melby how the administration's recommendation might affect the economic feasibility of the planned project. Mr. Melby responded that the reduction in land area and density would probably make the project unfeasible.

Commissioner Johnson asked if the church had considered other options for the location of the building, such as northeast of the church. Melby pointed out drawbacks to other locations, including access and proximity to the single-family neighborhood.

Commissioner Georgiev asked how much off-street parking will be provided and where it will be located. Mr. Melby responded, and also noted that the main access would be from 196th Street but they may need limited secondary access to the garden area.

Commissioner Elliott commented on the importance of making an objective decision while taking into consideration the interests of the church and its surrounding property owners.

Commissioner Bigler asked Melby how they could build senior housing that is both affordable and of high quality. Mr. Melby explained that high quality and affordability is possible because the church owns the land (no land costs), they will obtain good financing, and the units will be only about 500 sq. ft. in size.

Terri Watson, project manager with Tonkin/Hoyne/Lokan Architects informed the Commission that their firm specialized in affordable and senior housing. They work with people to design projects with positive effects on adjacent neighborhoods. She emphasized that there is no building design to consider at this time. A rectangle is shown on some plans to indicate the general size and location of a future project. She showed the Commission a rendering of a typical facility of this type.

Commissioner Johnson asked Ms. Watson if a compatible development is possible at this location, with lovely features similar to those of the Copper Ridge Condos. Ms. Watson indicated that it is possible.

Cindy & Paul Kang (19407 – 70th Ave.) asked Mr. Hough to project several neighborhood photographs onto the screen so the Commission could better understand the general character of the neighborhood. They objected to the church's Boundary Line Adjustment

on the basis that it would boost the density. They felt the proposal conflicts with the City's 60/40 goal. They pointed out the locations of other senior apartment facilities in the area. They like the quiet privacy of their cul-de-sac where they're kids can play in the street. Allowing access to 70th Avenue would be a nightmare, in their opinion. In response to a question from Commissioner Johnson, they had no objections to the Copper Ridge Condominiums. They also supported the administration's recommendation and reduction to 13 units instead of 40.

Chair Decker called a 5 min. recess at 8:30 pm.

Kathleen Wood (7031 – 196th Street SW, B-102) mentioned the conflict between the church's proposal and the City's 60/40 housing goal. She felt that there's no guarantee that a senior housing project will be built if they can't get funding for two years. She had gathered traffic accident statistics and found that 192 accidents had occurred on 196th Street between 68th Avenue and QFC from 1997 to 2005. She felt the addition of another high-density apartment project would contribute to the accident rate. She expressed concern about the size and height of a senior apartment building and about the reduced parking requirement. She showed photos of the new Scriber Pointe Senior Apartments and pointed out the large number of cars in the parking lot.

Rebecca Whitehouse (19427 – 70th Place W) talked about potential parking problems and crime and asked if gardens are more important than those living in the community.

Virginia Olson (Copper Ridge Condos, Unit 202-A) stated that crime and vandalism rates increase with higher density. She supported the City's 60/40 goal.

Mike Cooper (Copper Ridge Condos, Unit 101) described his unit's pleasant environment with the privacy, greenbelt, duck pond, etc. He doesn't want to lose those features. He also commented on the heavy traffic, accidents and difficulty in crossing 196th Street.

Teri Swinford (7006 – 194th Street) lives just west of the church's greenbelt. She enjoys the greenbelt and is opposed to changing the Plan designation and zoning.

Ken Weyant (19424 – 70th Ave. W) lives next to the church at the south end of the 70th Avenue cul-de-sac and is opposed to the requested change. He talked about the value of the greenbelt buffer and described how people used to cut through the church property to get to the 7/11 store before the fences were built.

Mahari Abraha (19430 – 70th Place W) advised the Commission to not fear the occupants of the proposed project, but to fear their visitors, noise, crime, pollution and other problems that might come with the project.

Tom & Grace Guichard (7023 – 194th Street SW) said they purchased their house because of its cul-de-sac location. Their two children ride their bikes in the street. They oppose opening up the northwest corner of the church property for access to the street. They choose the safety of their kids over the needs of seniors. Tom added that, if this proposal is approved, several houses in their neighborhood will go up for sale.

Konstantin & Natasha Setiaeu (19414 – 70th Place W) informed the Commission that they have had their car stolen and home broken into as a result of increasing traffic through their neighborhood from Edmonds Community College, Lynndale Park and local businesses. They agreed with Commissioner Elliott that some of the crime may be opportunistic and attributable to the nice homes in an area of increasing density.

Lannon Thomas (4515 – 176th Street, Space #45) is a resident of The Squire mobile home park and a charter member of the Good Shepherd Baptist Church. She described her difficulties in trying to sell her mobile home to help her mother who resides in a care facility. Ms. Thomas has several different health problems and needs to find a low-cost

housing unit for herself. In her position, she was having trouble relating to the people who were speaking against senior housing in order to protect their expensive homes. She said she has found one- to two-year waiting lists for most senior facilities, which demonstrates a strong need for more senior housing in this area. She supports the church's proposal.

Christopher Boyer, Pastor of Good Shepherd Baptist Church, described the church's proposal as a calling to provide and care for people in need. They have no intention of making a lot of money on the deal. They want to continue to be a good neighbor and also want to create a beautiful well-landscaped place for everyone's benefit.

Lynn Melby (spoke previously) The intent of the church is to improve the property, which will include removal of an old building, retention of the greenbelt and, if required by the City, a fire gate would be installed at the northwest corner of the property. They are not interested in using the gate for public access. He feels their proposed development will not contribute significantly to traffic on 196th Street where traffic mitigation is already needed. He also indicated that the church is willing to sign an agreement with the City that includes penalties, if necessary, to guarantee their proposed project.

Grace Guichard (spoke previously) clarified earlier comments about children and added her feeling that the proposed project will result in an increase in neighborhood crime.

Joy Melby (Mukilteo) commented on the driving habits of seniors and assured the Commission that seniors make very good neighbors.

Being no further testimony on the Good Shepherd Church proposal, Chair Decker called a 4 minute recess at 9:50 pm.

Planning Manager Ron Hough continued the staff presentation of the remaining Plan amendment proposals, all of which had been studied previously by the Commission.

Senior Planner Dennis Lewis described the B-2 Zone Review and showed maps and photos of the sites being reviewed. Chair Decker then asked if anyone in the audience wanted to comment on any of the remaining proposals.

Waymon Brand (6124 Larimer Rd., Everett) informed staff of a change of address of the Violet Brown property on 44th Avenue (Site C). He agreed with the recommendation of "No Change" and felt the B-2 zone was appropriate for this site. He pointed out that the larger of the two lots belongs to the adjacent church. He is trying to sell his lot but is having trouble because of an existing creek.

Ted Hikel (City Council Liaison) pointed out a problem with the purpose of the B-2 zone, which was included on page F-1-11 of the staff report. The current text says, "It is intended that this zone should be so located that it will completely occupy a large area of several city blocks . . ." No wording has been proposed to correct this. Staff explained that the B-2 zones were being reviewed within the context of the Comprehensive Plan amendment process and several changes have been proposed to the text of the Plan. If approved, related changes will be processed to the zoning regulations, including the correction noted by Council member Hikel.

At 10:19 PM, Chair Decker closed the public testimony portion of the hearing and continued the Commission's discussion portion, as well as the recommendations (Business item H-1), to the next regular meeting on August 11, 2005.

WORK SESSIONS

None

BUSINESS

H-1: Comprehensive Plan Amendments

This item was continued to the next regular meeting on August 11, 2005.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT & INFORMATION

The schedule of upcoming Commission meetings was included in the agenda packet and Director Cutts had no further report at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Commissioner Bigler to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Elliott, passed unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 10:21 pm.

Patrick Decker, Chair